The AIA Committee on the Environment's
MEASURES OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

COTE definition of sustainability and sustainable design:
Sustainability envisions the enduring prosperity of all living things.
Sustainable design seeks to create communities, buildings, and products that contribute to this vision.

Measure 1: Design & Innovation
Sustainable design is an inherent aspect of design excellence. Projects should express sustainable design concepts and intentions, and take advantage of innovative programming opportunities.

Measure 2: Regional/Community Design
Sustainable design values the unique cultural and natural character of a given region.

Measure 3: Land Use & Site Ecology
Sustainable design protects and benefits ecosystems, watersheds, and wildlife habitat in the presence of human development.

Measure 4: Bioclimatic Design
Sustainable design conserves resources and maximizes comfort through design adaptations to site-specific and regional climate conditions.

Measure 5: Light & Air
Sustainable design creates comfortable interior environments that provide daylight, views, and fresh air.

Measure 6: Water Cycle
Sustainable design conserves water and protects and improves water quality.

Measure 7: Energy Flows & Energy Future
Sustainable design conserves energy and resources and reduces the carbon footprint while improving building performance and comfort. Sustainable design anticipates future energy sources and needs.

Measure 8: Materials & Construction
Sustainable design includes the informed selection of materials and products to reduce product-cycle environmental impacts, improve performance, and optimize occupant health and comfort.

Measure 9: Long Life, Loose Fit
Sustainable design seeks to enhance and increase ecological, social, and economic values over time.

Measure 10: Collective Wisdom and Feedback Loops
Sustainable design strategies and best practices evolve over time through documented performance and shared knowledge of lessons learned.